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towards the shore, but now aimed at a point further up stream. The crocodile without any apparent hurry turned and approached the buck again until within four feet, then it again jumped forward, and its jaws closed on its victim's head. Buck and crocodile disappeared under the water, and did not come to the surface again during the ten or fifteen minutes I waited.

H. C. RAVEN,
New York, N. Y.

[See account of a Crocodile, H. C. Raven, *Forest and Stream*, June, 1921, p. 256.]

THE CALIFORNIA OR ROSY BOA (*LICH- ANURA ROSEOFUSCA* COPE).

It might be of interest to note the food reactions of a California boa in captivity. The literature of the life-history of this species is somewhat scanty. The captive was taken, Dec. 16, 1917 in the desert, seven miles south of Palm Springs, San Bernardino Co., California, by Dr. J. Chester Bradley. He kept it as a pet until the following May when it was shipped to me at Ithaca, N. Y. During the period of Dec. 1917-May, 1918, it fed on nothing. With us it began the same career and fasted. Flies, spiders, various insects, and worms were offered but not accepted.

In midsummer we placed in its cage a house mouse. Later the same day we discovered the mouse had been killed. It had apparently been seized between the eyes but not eaten. In a few days we captured a live white-foot mouse and placed it with the snake. Almost instantly it began to be active. The snake deliberate normally became animated. Soon it seized the mouse on the side of the body. Then it began to coil itself about the animal. When the prey was sufficiently held by the coils the snake released its mouth hold and felt along the body and head until it seized the mouse between the eyes as in the house mouse. Then it began to crush the creature with its coils. But this mouse it also did not eat. In either case it was not the size which was responsible for the non-completion of the process, as was later revealed.

Our main objective was to make it feed. In two nesting boxes were young English sparrows of which we wished to dispose. We placed one in the cage. Instantly the snake seized it by the body, coiled about it, released mouth hold, sought the head, began crushing with coils and finally began swallowing the bird quite rapidly for a snake. There were practically no feathers on the bird. Thereafter it ate young English sparrows. It usually went through the process we have described, a truly constrictor habit. Rarely, however, it would seize the bird by leg or head and swallow it at once with no coiling about the bird at all. Is its natural habit feeding on young birds of the desert?

As a pet I consider it the finest native snake of the states. It is gentle, never bites, is clean and glossy of skin, coils into a ball or up the arm and is a beautifully patterned snake. This individual was befriended by the whole neighborhood of children.

A. H. WRIGHT,
Ithaca, N. Y.

XIPHISTER VERSUS XIPHIDION

In 1859 Charles Girard gave the name *Xiphidion* to a well-marked genus of California blennies. Because of the name *Xiphidium* given to a genus of grasshoppers by Burmeister in 1838, in 1879 I introduced the new name *Xiphister* for the California fish-genus. But on the theory that *Xiphidion* and *Xiphidium* were different names, being spelled differently, Jordan and Evermann reverted in 1898 to *Xiphidion*. Mr. Morgan Hebard of the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Science informs me that the genus of grasshoppers was first named *Xiphidion* by Serville in 1831, *Xiphidium* being a purist correction. The name *Xiphister* should, therefore, stand for *Xiphister mucosus* and its allies.

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EDITED BY J. T. NICHOLS, American Museum of Natural History

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